

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on May 19, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully considered.

Additionally attached to this Amendment are Revocation of Power of Attorney with new Power of Attorney and Change of Correspondence Address forms. The Examiner is urged to please note that all correspondence should now be forwarded to the undersigned attorney's address.

In this Amendment, Applicants have revised figures 3 and 7, editorially amended the specification, canceled claims 10 and 11, amended claims 1, 2 and 9, and added claim 12. Claims 1, 2 and 9 are the independent claims, and claims 1-9 and 12 are currently pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings for not including the reference character number 41, and because the reference character number 11 in figure 3 should be the reference character number 10. In response thereto, submitted concurrently with this Amendment, is a revised figure 3 and a revised figure 7, in which figure 3 has been amended in the manner proposed by the Examiner's Action, and in which figure 7 has been amended to provide the reference character number 41. It is submitted that the drawings comply with all official provisions, and it is requested that these objections be withdrawn.

The Examiner has also objected to the disclosure for various informalities. In response, the disclosure has been amended to correct the informalities

specifically note by the Examiner's Action, and to correct other informalities noted during the review. It is requested that this objection be withdrawn.

It is noted with great appreciation that the Examiner considers the subject matter of original claims 2, 3 and 5-8 as being allowable over the art of record. In response, claim 2 has been amended into independent form, thus placing this claim, and the claims dependent therefrom, in *prima facie* condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 4 and 9 as being anticipated by *Kotlier* (USP 6,082,753). It is submitted that these claims are *prima facie* patentably distinguishable over the cited reference for at least the following reasons.

Applicants' independent claim 1 is directed to a quick-release joint which includes, *inter alia*, a first connector and a second connector. The second connector is pivotally connected to the first connector, so that the second connector is pivotal relative to the first connector about a pivot axis. Further, the second connector is slidable along the pivot axis so as to be movable to a position axially offset from the first connector. Additionally, the second connector has a protrusion which has an outer groove, and the first connector has an inner lip which corresponds to the outer groove. A retainer is provided which moves the first connector to axially align with the second connector such that the inner lip is received in the outer groove to secure connection between the first connector and the second connector. Claim 9 recites similar features. This claimed invention has several advantages, especially as compared to the cited reference. In particular, Applicants' claimed invention provides for a much more secure

arrangement than that provided by the *Kotlier* patent. Moreover, due to the advantageous recited configuration, no forces will be applied to the pivotal connection between the first and second connectors when the bike is in use. Thus, Applicants' claimed invention will have a long life span. In contrast, the hinge disclosed by the cited reference is subjected to pulling, bending and twisting forces when the bike is being ridden. This claimed invention, and the advantages associated therewith, is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited reference.

Kotlier discloses a method of using a folding trailer gooseneck, which includes a connector assembly 50. The connector assembly 50 includes a first hinge member 100 and a second hinge member 200 which are joined by a pin 52. As shown in figure 2, and as disclosed by this patent, the first hinge member 100 is pivotal about the axis of the pin 52 and relative to the second hinge member 200. However, and in contrast to the present invention, there is absolutely no disclosure or suggestion from this reference that the hinge member 100 is slidable along a pivot axis so as to be movable to a position axially offset from the hinge member 200, as would be required by Applicants' independent claims 1 and 9. That is, whereas Applicants' claimed connectors are both pivotal relative to one another and slidable relative to one another about and along the pivot axis, the cited reference discloses only one degree of movement, that is, a pivoting action about the pin 52. Thus, the hinge disclosed by this cited reference will be subject to various forces when the bike is being ridden, which will greatly shorten its life span and require frequent adjustments of the release mechanism. Moreover,

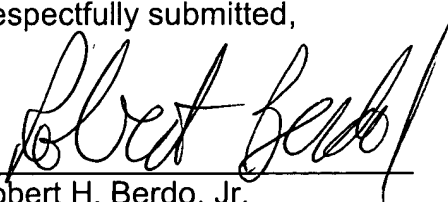
tolerances will increase during the usage of the bike, which will cause the bike to feel unsteady and unsafe. As such, since the cited reference does not disclose or otherwise suggest Applicants' claimed invention, it is requested that Applicants' independent claims 1 and 9 be allowed, and it is further requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action and the passing of this case to issue are requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Should any fee be required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 18-0002, and advise us accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

RHB:vm

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